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The Southern Frontier

We dedicate ourselves to the task of doing the most and the best that can be done here and now.

VOL. VI JULY, 1945 NO. 7

Senator Eastland and The Negro Soldier

A Prayer

On June 29, when the United States Senate began the day, this was the chaplain's prayer: "We thank Thee for public servants who in the darkened valleys of these tragic times have failed not to lift unto the hills of help the eyes of this stricken generation, messengers of good will, who from the mountain tops of vision are now heralding a dawning day. So guide by Thy wisdom the deliberations of this body entrusted with vast power that awes and solemnizes our hearts that here in the fires of a great passion for healing peace the sacrifices for freedom may be sanctified . . ."

Filibuster

This was the next to last day of the fiscal year. The business before the Senate was an appropriation bill, carrying funds for the next year for a sheaf of war agencies, including the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practices. Senator Bilbo of Mississippi had wasted days of the Senate's time in his filibuster against FEPC, and now it was the turn of the Junior Senator from that State, 40-year-old James O. Eastland, to block a bill that a great majority of the Senate was ready to vote favorably on.

Senator Eastland trotted out the old, discredited arguments: The FEPC, he said, is staffed with Communists: it is not needed; the object of those who push it is agitation for the sake of division; it prepares the ground for racial amalgamation, threatens free enterprise, and is another step in CIO-PAC's drive to "take over" American business. He was talking for time, and he threw in a long denunciation of Liberia and scathing comments on the personnel of the various FEPC offices.

Attack On Negro Troops

This was old stuff that ordinarily would not have made the papers. But in the course of the speech, Eastland repeatedly attacked the record of Negro troops in this war. His statements were insulting to the United States armed forces and a bitter wound to the pride of the million Negroes in the Services and the twelve million Negroes from whose homes the soldiers and sailors and marines went into the War.

Here is some of the abuse. "I recently returned from Europe. While there I talked to numerous high-ranking generals of the American Army, some of them in a peculiar position to know the facts. . . . What is the combat record of the Ninety-second Division, the only Negro division that has seen service in Europe?

"To begin with that division—and I state it authoritatively—had the best equipment . . . [and] training of any division in the American Army. For political reasons—and when I say 'political reasons' I quote American generals—they were forced to commission some Negro officers for that division. In not one instance could they place upon his shoulders the responsibility of combat, and I tell you now . . . that division could not be placed in an important position in the line . . .

"I Am Not Prejudiced"

"The Negro soldier was an utter and dismal failure in combat in Europe. When I make that statement it is not from prejudice. I am not prejudiced against the Negro." [Laughter in the galleries.]

". . . In a number of instances these soldiers would desert their posts of duty, officers would desert their posts of duty, without cause, and the whole division would, without cause, rhyme, or reason, quit fighting. The officers told us the soldiers had no initiative, no sense of responsibility, very low intelligence, and were a failure."

After further charges that Negro troops in Normandy had been guilty of atrocities, and that French Senegalese soldiers had abused captive German women, the Senator declared that "the conduct of the Negro soldier . . . all over Europe was disgraceful," and that the Negro soldier has disgraced the flag of his country. . . . He will not fight. He will not work."

Toward the end, after allusions to the views of prejudiced white soldiers, he said, "This agitation for social equality has destroyed racial tolerance, and I state frankly, that the white soldier is openly and avowedly waiting for his chance when he returns to the United States."

Through the weary years of Ben Tillman and Tom Watson and John Rankin and Theo. Bilbo we have become accustomed to race-hate oratory. But it is a new thing to condemn the fighting spirit of Negro soldiers. Think what these words mean to the men who have worked and fought for their country, and to all Negroes, everywhere.

What the Generals Really Say

Eastland named no names for his authorities. His charges are belied by repeated praise of Negro troops from Generals Eisenhower, Clark, MacArthur, Stilwell, Eaker, Lanham, Patton, and others. Under-secretary of War Patterson has praised their qualities, since Eastland's

(*Continued on Page 4*)

After The War—?

Do You Remember?

Do you remember what happened after World War I? There was an increase in lynching, there were race riots, and there were organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan which promoted and exploited racial intolerance. Unless people of good will are on guard and act vigorously, history may repeat itself after the present war.

No group in the South has done more for the promotion of better racial understanding and for the reduction of violence than the leaders of women's religious organizations. In February, 1945, the Southern Regional Council called together a small group of women religious leaders to discuss race relations in the post-war period. These women agreed upon a program of action for interracial peace and justice. This article presents their program and other suggestions for constructive social action.*

If we are properly prepared we can do a great deal to prevent or to reduce race friction and misunderstanding in the post-war period.

There Are Things to Do—

For Your Community

1. Look out for rumors or other symptoms of racial tension, and do your best to counteract them.
2. Be ever alert to sense situations that may lead to serious trouble, and take preventive steps wherever possible. Notify your local or state interracial committee and the Southern Regional Council when such situations arise.
3. Establish friendly contacts with your mayor, police chief, and sheriff. Try to show them that much racial friction can be prevented by the wise use of police power, and call their attention to the successful use of Negro police in various Southern cities.
4. Confer with people who handle the public on busses, street cars, etc. Many tensions can be eased by good judgment and the cooperation of interested groups.
5. Be courteous when speaking of people of minority groups, and discourage by your own example the use of derogatory and contemptuous words.
6. Try to establish an honest bond of confidence and cooperation with other women's groups across denominational and racial lines.

*Available in leaflet form, with suggested readings, from SRC free of charge.

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To attain through research and action programs the ideals and practices of equal opportunity for all peoples in the region.

Editorial

The *First Report* of the Fair Employment Practice Committee, which has just been published, is worthy of careful reading. Covering the period of July, 1943 to December, 1944, this 152-page publication is a clear, concise, and graphically illustrated analysis of the functions and operations of the FEPC.

Over 5800 complaints of discrimination were received by the FEPC during the period covered by the report. Private business was the offender in 69% of the cases docketed up to June 30, 1944; federal agencies, 24%; and labor unions, 6%.

In the 3030 cases closed through June 30, 1944, "race," involving Negroes for the most part, accounted for 80.6% of the complaints; "creed," involving Jews, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc., accounted for 9.7%; and "national origin" and "alienage" accounted for 9.7%. Charges made in the order of their importance were: refusal to hire, unwarranted dismissal, refusal to upgrade, discriminatory working conditions, refusal to refer qualified workers for employment.

The East contributed 32.5% of the total cases docketed; the South, 28.8%; the Midwest, 21.8%; and the Far West, 16.9%. The distribution of cases satisfactorily adjusted was: East, 39.4%; South, 18.6%; Midwest 24.5%; and Far West, 17.5%.

It is interesting to note that 64% of all complaints processed have been dismissed or withdrawn for one reason or another. The remaining 36% have been "satisfactorily adjusted."

Commenting on "regional discrimination patterns," the report says:

"A heavy concentration of complaints of discrimination from the big war industry centers is both to be expected and is a fact. Cases from the industrialized East form 32.5 percent of FEPC's docket. The Midwest and Far West together come second; the South last. Yet compliance in southern war industries does not lag notably behind the rest of the country. It is higher than in the Far West, although figures from that section reflect a large number of unsolved cases in one industry.

If a generality is to be derived from FEPC experience, it is that the successful use of minority group workers in war industry has been achieved. The guiding hand of Government has been essential. The previous efforts of private agencies over many years had familiarized industry with the problem and had developed many effective techniques for dealing with it. Obviously success is easier where those immediately involved, employers and workers, determine that it shall be done. Georgraphical considerations have often proven of secondary importance."

Whatever one thinks of the desirability or efficacy of the proposed federal legislation creating a permanent FEPC with enforcement powers, one must admit that the present FEPC, created by Executive Order of the President, has tackled a difficult problem and has done its work well.

Should Save FEPC

The Bristol, Va., Herald Courier
June 6, 1945

"FEPC" stands for Fair Employment Practices Committee. The United States has such an agency and has had since 1941, when it was created by executive order of the late President Roosevelt. It was designed to prevent war plants, in hiring workers, from discriminating against any one because of race, creed, color or racial origin, and it has largely accomplished its purpose.

One might say on first thought that the FEPC has accomplished its purpose mainly because, since its creation, there has been more than enough employment for all who needed it or would take it. And there may be some truth in that, yet in the last two years the agency has received more than 8,000 complaints of discrimination and disposed of all but 2,500. About 85 per cent of the cases involved complaints of discrimination against Negroes, and about 5 per cent charged discrimination against Jews.

Such complaints, or the incidents which cause them, are likely to increase as conditions move back toward normal. There will be gradual curtailment of war production and not so many jobs will be available for the working millions. In the growing competition for available jobs, pressure may be exerted upon many employers to practice discrimination against some classes of workers on account of race or color or religion.

Such discrimination caused creation of the Fair Employment Practices Committee. It is out of place in this great Democracy, where all men are supposed to have equality of opportunity, and the FEPC has done much toward its elimination. But that agency will expire the last of this month unless Congress gives it a new lease on life. Indications that it may be permitted to die hardly can be welcome to those who sincerely believe this should be a land where there is equality of opportunity for all, regardless of color or class, race or religion. Congress should save the FEPC.

Conferences and the SRC Staff

Staff members of the SRC have been participating in several conferences designed to promote the organization's interest and to work on the problems of human and social relations that are of regional and national concern.

Dr. Guy B. Johnson, the Executive Director, participated in a New Orleans' conference on post-war problems and met with state interracial committees in Jackson, Mississippi, Louisville, Kentucky, and Fort Worth, Texas.

The Associate Director, Dr. Ira Reid, participated in Dillard University's High School Principals conference on post-war education, was chairman of a significant conference on veterans' adjustment called by the War Manpower Commission in Atlanta, was a faculty member at a series of Institutes conducted by the American Friends Service Committee at Des Moines, Iowa; Wichita, Kansas; and Seattle, Washington; was coordinator of discussion groups at the AMA Institute of Race Relations at Fisk University, and was a consultant on human relations at the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Public School Workshop.

Dr. George Mitchell, Director for Veterans' Affairs, lectures at the A. M. A. Race Relations Institute, Fisk University, and at the Lake Junaluska Conference of the Woman's Society of Christian Service, Southeastern Jurisdiction, of the Methodist Church.

Mrs. Henry Havens, Field Representative, met with the Goodwill Committee in Daytona Beach and the Executive Board of the South Carolina Committee of the Southern Regional Council in Columbia. Mrs. M. E. Tilly, Field Representative, met with the Kentucky and the Georgia interracial committees, and is member of a committee which is planning a health conference in Georgia.

A Primer for Adults

If you would like to know how the average citizen can work to promote programs for satisfying neighborhood needs in your community, and the principles underlying the planning that it involves, you should read *YOU AND YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD, A PRIMER.* It is published by Revere Copper and Brass, Incorporated, 230 Park Avenue, New York 17, New York, and may be secured without cost.

Springfield Plan

The Springfield Plan, by Alexander Alland and James W. Wise, with its excellent photographs and simple text, is the best thing we have seen on this plan for intercultural education. Published by The Viking Press, 18 East 48th St., New York 17, N. Y. Price, $2.50.

Whether you are friend or foe of FEPC, you should know the facts about its work. You can get the *First Report* from the Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

Resettling Japanese-Americans From Central Utah Project

By Oscar Hoffman

When on December 17, 1944, the United States Army announced the lifting of the mass exclusion order for people of Japanese ancestry to be effective as of January 2, 1945, residents at the Central Utah Relocation Center reacted with mixed feelings. In one mess hall diners received the information in hushed silence. Some were unable to finish their meal and retired early to their own apartments. Instead of shouting their delight at being permitted to return to their homes, many evacuees were sad because with the Army's lifting of the mass exclusion order, War Relocation Authority announced its intention to close all WRA Centers by January 2, 1946.

Prospective closing of the camp shocked evacuees into a realization that they would have to leave the security and protection of WRA and face what the majority probably regarded as a hostile America bent on using economic boycott and other techniques to discourage Japanese settling in their midst.

The large majority of evacuees showed little interest in relocation until about the end of March. Many waited for WRA to provide more generous resettlement assistance. Leaders argued that since evacuees had lost heavily during evacuation—some their crops, others their business, and/or their household effects—WRA should compensate them for such losses to aid resettlement. A small but vociferous minority urged residents to stay in camp until war's end. Others remained indifferent to relocation—January 2, 1946, was so far in the future!

By early May, however, the voice of the resistance group was only faintly audible. A large proportion of the more relocatable elements of the population began making definite plans to resettle: property owners to return to their West Coast homes; families with sufficient cash resources to buy homes either on the West Coast or elsewhere in the United States; domestics and gardeners to accept job offers where employers furnished housing; and alien parents in larger numbers to join their daughters and sons relocated in the Middle West or East.

This change in resident attitude and action at Central Utah was the result of a number of factors. On May 5 the local WRA administration closed two mess halls, dramatizing WRA's insistence on completing its program on schedule. After waiting four months for increased WRA resettlement assistance, most evacuees lost hope of more help from that source. With the end of war in Europe and the tempo of war rising in the Pacific, the wisdom of becoming reestablished economically became evident. WRA's announced policy not to reopen the schools in the fall induced parents to plan to move before the beginning of the new school term. Several outstanding political leaders departed on short term leave for the West Coast to investigate resettlement opportunities. Rank-and-file evacuees were impressed when Protestant evacuee ministers left to explore the possibility of resettling their congregations in the San Francisco Bay Area and especially when they a little later took terminal departure to establish hostels in that area. Then, too, there was the growing realization that the time for making resettlement plans was drawing short.

Even though the relocation picture in the Central Utah Project today (June 1), looks brighter than at any time since January 2, the problem of resettling 5200 evacuees still looms large. To illustrate: Farm renters, many of them having lost or sold their machinery, fear their inability to obtain priorities for purchase of such equipment or to raise funds for the purpose. To rent land from Caucasians as they did prior to evacuation will have to be done in the face of public pressure upon land owners not to lease land to persons of Japanese ancestry. Family heads with several small children, especially if cash resources are altogether or almost depleted, question their ability to support such family groups, provide necessary medical services, and secure housing adequate to their needs. The aged, whose sons are in the Army or who have no children or other near kin to care for them in the event of an emergency or when they become infirm, dread becoming stranded where there is no concentration of Japanese population. Their period of usefulness over or nearly so, aged bachelors feel they have no place to go.

The housing shortage acts as a serious deterrent to relocation. Since a large majority of the evacuees in the Central Utah Project were evacuated from the San Francisco Bay Area, naturally many think in terms of resettling there. But the housing shortage in the area is unusually acute. Even Caucasians sometimes "house hunt" eight to twelve weeks. For Japanese, since white property owners in many residential districts have convenanted not to rent or sell their dwellings to Orientals, the problem is almost insoluble.

Nor is there much housing available in the old Colony, centered at Post Street in San Francisco, where an estimated six thousand Japanese lived prior to evacuation. The district has been taken over by possibly more than double that number of Negroes, many of whom migrated from the Deep South for defense jobs. That a few thousand Negroes could be moved out by January 2, 1946, to make room for evacuees seems unlikely. True, the displacement of this racial group by evacuees might conceivably be accomplished at least in part if the latter owned most of the property in the former Colony. But according to best estimates by WRA officials in the Bay Area, probably not more than 61 properties are owned by Colony Japanese, only 25 of which are dwellings.

In short, although probably 95% of the Central Utah residents now have the will to relocate, the task of resettling the residue by year's end will be stupendous in view of all the factors that complicate resettlement.

Negro War Migration

The *First Report* of the Fair Employment Practice Committee covers the period July 1943-December 1944. It is a significant and valuable public document indicating the problems this country faces in attempting to bring about economic freedom for the masses of its workers. But of as great import as the various problems of discrimination presented is the report's analysis of some fundamental changes taking place in American life, one of which is Negro war migration.

It is estimated that between April, 1940, and November, 1944, there was a net migration of 4,350,000 persons across state lines, a migration which includes 470,000 Negro migrants. If, says the report, "we add to these figures movement of Negro workers and their families from rural areas and smaller communities to major war production centers, within the same states, we get a total figure for Negro migration which has been estimated at 600,000 through 1943 and 750,000 through 1944. The new flow of this migration, and one which is growing in importance, is from Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Missouri to the West Coast.

The general movement of Negro migrants has been from southern agricultural areas to southern cities, and from southern cities and towns to northern and western industrial centers. "For example, 37 per cent of the Negro migrants into Mobile, Ala., came from farms, whereas only 14 per cent of the Negroes who migrated to Detroit, Mich., were from rural areas. Again 70 per cent of the Negroes who moved to Charleston, S. C., came from elsewhere in the same State and only 27 per cent from other states."

Johnson Heads Southern Sociologists

Dr. Charles S. Johnson, Director of the Department of Social Sciences, Fisk University, and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Southern Regional Council, was elected President of the Southern Sociological Society for the 1945-1946 term.

The Southern Sociological Society has consistently worked for normal professional relationships between the races in its meetings and operation. In the past Negro members have served as vice-presidents and as members of the organization's executive committee. Dr. Johnson, former vice-president of the American Sociological Society, becomes the first Negro to head the Southern Sociological Society. His election is a tribute to his high professional standing and to the high social resolves of the Society.

Senator Eastland—cont'd

speech. Here are quotes from some of the Generals:

General Eisenhower: **"I have seen Negro soldiers in this war and I have many reports on their work where they have rendered very valuable contributions and some of them with the greatest enthusiasm. . . . They have done their job, and they have done the job given them."**

General MacArthur: **"Race has nothing whatever to do with a man's ability to fight. . . . [The Services of the Negro soldiers] have been magnificent, their patience, their fortitude, their courage, and their complete devotion to their country mark them as belonging to the nation's noblest citizens."**

General Stilwell: **"Before these troops arrived no one ever thought of working during the monsoon season, but I have seen these men continue on the job when there was 10 inches of rainfall in one day."**

Citations

Here is a sample pair of the citations of Negro soldiers in the 104 Timberwolf Division, for bravery in the battle of Germany:

Silver Star

To: Staff Sergeant Claud Pierce, Jr., 308 South 5th Street, Easton, Pennsylvania.

". . . then private first class, Infantry, Company A, 114th Infantry, United States Army, for gallantry in action in Germany on April 13, 1945. When a tank was hit and set afire by enemy artillery, Sergeant Pierce dashed across open terrain in the face of devastating enemy fire to remove the trapped crew. Although twice knocked from the tank by the concussion of near misses from direct enemy artillery fire, he climbed back on the flaming tank, extinguished the fire, and removed the crew from the tank. After administering first aid, he carried the more seriously wounded men across two hundred yards of fire-swept terrain to safety and medical aid. The gallantry and cool courage in the face of grave danger displayed by Sergeant Pierce, far above and beyond the call of duty, exemplify the finest tradition of the American combat soldier."

Bronze Star Medal

To: Private First Class Peter Dodson, 81 Orchard, Roslyn Heights, Long Island, New York.

. . . leading a patrol into enemy territory, Private Dodson was wounded in the hand, but he tenaciously continued his mission. Observing an enemy tank two hundred yards distant, he advanced alone, threw a rock at the tank to attract attention, and shot the tank commander with a captured pistol when he emerged from the tank. The remainder of the tank crew were so terror-stricken that they immediately surrendered. The audacious intrepidity and cool courage displayed by Private Dodson exemplify the finest traditions of the American combat soldier, reflecting the highest credit upon himself and the military service."

As to the 92nd Division, by April, 1945, their men had won seven awards of the Legion of Merit, 65 Silver Stars, 162 Bronze Stars, four Air Medals, and 1,377 Purple Hearts.

The Postwar South—1918-1921

In the last postwar South, there was race conflict and there was interracial cooperation. Have we learned anything? Can we do better this time? Here are some of the highlights from that other postwar era.

- The Commission on Interracial Cooperation was organized. (1918)
- Lynchings: 60 Negroes, 4 whites (1918)
- During 1919 programs for interracial cooperation were proposed by such organizations as the Memphis Chamber of Commerce, the Nashville Commercial Club, the Industrial Welfare Committee of Greenville, Mississippi.
- The Nashville Commercial Club's proposals covered six points—

  "Humane treatment by the police when arrests are made, with fair and impartial trial at the petty city court and the deputy magistrate's court; correction of unfair discrimination on street cars whereby colored passengers do not receive the same treatment as is given white passengers; equal salaries in schools and equal wages for equal work; improvement and development of parks and playgrounds for colored people; courteous treatment at railway ticket offices and other places where Negroes must go in attending to routine business affairs; a correction of unkind statements in the press with suppression of unsubstantiated stories of Negro crime."
- The International Convention of the YMCA appointed a Committee on Colored Work. (1918)
- Lynchings: 76 Negroes, 7 whites (1919)
- At the conference of Governors held in Salt Lake City, Utah in 1920, the Secretary and the President of the Southern Sociological Congress presented a program for the improvement of race relations which included:

  "Liberation from the fear of injustice and mob violence; protection of citizenship rights in travel, housing, recreation and education; employment of Negro physicians, nurses, policemen in local communities."
- Lynchings: 53 Negroes, 8 whites (1920)
- Church workers, meeting at Blue Ridge, N. C. issued a manifesto on constructive measures that may be taken by exercising justice, consideration and sympathetic cooperation. (1920)
- The Methodist Episcopal Church elected two Negro Bishops with full ecclesiastical powers at the General Conference in Des Moines, Iowa. (1920)
- The Universal Negro Improvement Association, known as the "Garvey Movement" or the "Back to Africa Movement" held its first International Convention in New York. (1920)
- The General Education Board aided 87 summer schools for Negro teachers. (1921)
- The American Federation of Labor at its annual meeting in Denver reiterated its stand that "it is the duty of all workers to organize regardless of sex, nationality, race, political belief or color." Samuel Gompers said: "The Federation, however, cannot force this view upon individual or affiliated unions without their consent." (1921)
- Lynchings: 59 Negroes, 5 whites (1921)
- President Harding discussed the race problem at length in Birmingham, Ala. (1921)
- Governor Hugh Dorsey of Georgia spoke out against outbreaks of lawlessness in Georgia, called a conference of citizens at Atlanta, and made suggestions to end these conditions. (1921)
- Nashville passed ordinance to enforce Jim-Crow Car law on street cars. (1921)
  President Harding recommended that Congress appoint a Commission to study the race problem. (1921)
- Kentucky (1920 passed an anti-lynching law. North Carolina and West Virginia did likewise. (1921)
- Negro policemen were employed in Knoxville and Memphis, Tennessee, Austin, Houston and Galveston (Texas), Muskogee, Oklahoma City and Tulsa (Okla.) and Wheeling, (W. Va.) Negro probation officers worked in connection with the Juvenile Courts of Louisville, Richmond, Atlanta, Savannah, and in the following Alabama cities: Huntsville, Montgomery, Birmingham, Selma, Tuscaloosa and Mobile.
- Near riot in Birmingham .....March 1, 1919.
  Riot, Charleston, S. C.....May 10, 1919.
  Riot, Longview, Texas.....July 11, 1919.
  Riot, Knoxville, Tenn.....August 30-31, 1919.
  Riot, Elaine, Arkansas.....October 1-3, 1919.
  Riot, Ocala, Florida.....November 3, 1920.
  Riot, Tulsa, Oklahoma....May 31-June 1, 1921.
- Ku Klux Klan was revived and became a powerful reactionary organization.

Let's Be Fair!

The South is proud of all her sons who have gone into the War. We want them back, and we want them honored for what they have done.

White Southerners have now a special job of making it clear to the Negroes that we know they did their whole part, notwithstanding the disadvantages and the insults that were put upon them—as civilians and as soldiers. Some justice lives in the South. After Eastland's speech it will be harder than ever to convince Negroes that this is so, but we have the job to do.

Mississippians can write Senator Eastland, and tell him they don't like what he said. That will help. Perhaps the best we can do is to see to it, in our own communities, that as these boys come home their home towns give recognition—public recognition and personal recognition—of the full share they bore in the victory over fascism abroad.

After the War—cont'd

For Veterans

1. Become familiar with the "GI Bill" so that you may know the provisions made by the government for all veterans.
2. Become acquainted with the personnel of the Veterans' Assistance Committee in your local community, and use your influence to see that the interests of Negro veterans are fairly represented on the Committee.
3. Take the initiative, if the Veterans' Assistance Committee is not already set up, in bringing together representatives of community groups to work with government agencies to form a clearing committee for assisting veterans and their families.
4. Use your influence to see that the "GI Bill" is administered in your community without discrimination on account of race, creed, or color.
5. Encourage women to accept responsibility on such committees as an essential community service.